Supreme Court, U.S.
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No. 02-1675

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION, ET AL., APPELLANTS

v.

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION, ET AL.

ON APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

RESPONSE OF APPELLEES FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION, ET AL.

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QUESTION PRESENTED

In 2002, the President signed into law the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA), Pub. L. No. 107-155, 116 Stat. 81. BCRA is designed to address various abuses associated with the financing of federal election campaigns and thereby protect the integrity of the federal electoral process. The question presented by this appeal is as follows:

Whether BCRA's funding limitations and disclosure requirements pertaining to "electioneering communications" are constitutional.

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RESPONSE OF APPELLEES FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION, ET AL.[1]

OPINIONS BELOW

The opinions of the district court are not yet reported. See J.S. App. 4a.

JURISDICTION

The judgment of the district court was entered on May 2, 2003. Appellants' notice of appeal (J.S. App. 1a-3a) was filed on May 5, 2003. Appellants' jurisdictional statement was filed on May 6, 2003. The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked under the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-155, § 403(a)(3), 116 Stat. 114.

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[1] This response is filed on behalf of the Federal Election Commission (FEC) and David M. Mason, Ellen L. Weintraub, Danny L. McDonald, Bradley A. Smith, Scott E. Thomas, and Michael E. Toner, in their capacities as Commissioners of the FEC; John Ashcroft, in his capacity as Attorney General of the United States; the United States Department of Justice; the Federal Communications Commission; and the United States of America. Those parties are appellants in Federal Election Commission v. Mitch McConnell, United States Senator, No. 02-1676.

STATEMENT

This case presents a facial challenge to the constitutionality of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA), Pub. L. No. 107-155, 116 Stat. 81. A three-judge panel of the District Court for the District of Columbia held that several provisions of BCRA violate the First Amendment to the Constitution, while sustaining other BCRA provisions against various constitutional challenges. Congress has vested this Court with direct appellate jurisdiction over the district court's decision. See BCRA § 403(a)(3), 116 Stat. 114.

Appellants challenge various rulings of the district court rejecting appellants' constitutional challenges in part. As of this date, three other jurisdictional statements arising out of the same district court judgment are pending before this Court. See Mitch McConnell, United States Senator v. Federal Election Commission, No. 02-1674; Federal Election Commission v. Mitch McConnell, United States Senator, No. 02-1676 (see note 1, supra); John McCain, United States Senator v. McConnell, United States Senator, No. 02-1702.

DISCUSSION

Under Section 403(a)(3) of BCRA, the final decision of the district court in this case is "reviewable only by appeal directly to the Supreme Court of the United States." 116 Stat. 114. Pursuant to Section 403(a)(4) of BCRA, this Court is directed "to

advance on the docket and to expedite to the greatest possible extent the disposition of the * * * appeal." 116 Stat. 114. In addition to filing our own jurisdictional statement (see note 1, supra) to appeal the district court's rulings declaring certain provisions of BCRA to be invalid, appellees will defend on appeal those provisions of the statute that were sustained against appellants' constitutional challenges. Appellees agree, however, that appellants' jurisdictional statement identifies substantial questions of federal law and that this Court should note probable jurisdiction over the appeal.[2]

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[2] Contemporaneously with this response, appellees are filing a motion for expedited briefing schedule applicable to this appeal and to the other pending appeals (see p. 2, supra) from the district court's judgment in this case.

CONCLUSION

The Court should note probable jurisdiction.

Respectfully submitted.

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